

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 684

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Elizabeth "Libby" Zerfoss Fryer of Davidson County.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Elizabeth "Libby" Zerfoss Fryer; and

WHEREAS, Libby Fryer was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born on September 14, 1922, in Nashville to Kate Savage Zerfoss, M.D. and Thomas Bowman Zerfoss, M.D., Elizabeth "Libby" Zerfoss Fryer attended Stokes School, Peabody Demonstration School, and Ward Belmont, from which she graduated in 1939; and

WHEREAS, Libby Fryer then attended Vanderbilt University, where she majored in political science. She moved to Ohio at the time of her first marriage to Syd Houston Hailey, Jr., in 1942, and completed her undergraduate education at the University of Cincinnati, receiving a bachelor's degree in 1943; she earned her master's degree in library science from George Peabody College in 1951; and

WHEREAS, except for a brief period during World War II, Mrs. Fryer lived her entire life in or near Nashville. She and her family moved to a rural property in Brentwood in 1955, but she and her husband returned to her parent's home in Nashville in the 1970s; she spent the last six years of her life as a well-known and highly respected member of the Franklin community; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Fryer served with acumen and alacrity as a librarian at the Nashville Public Library, where she established the Business Information Service; she then took a position as librarian for the Southern Education Reporting Service, a nonprofit project documenting the civil rights movement and school desegregation in seventeen Southern and border states in the 1960s; and

WHEREAS, Libby Fryer served as librarian and/or library planner for several Nashville area private schools, including Battle Ground Academy in Franklin, Brentwood Academy, Montgomery Bell Academy, and Franklin Road Academy, and also assisted with the planning of several private book collections; she organized libraries for Ensworth School, the Nashville Chamber of Commerce, and the Tennessee State Planning Commission, and was a member of the Tennessee Library Association; and

WHEREAS, a public-spirited citizen of the highest order, Libby Fryer enjoyed a groundbreaking political career as well, which began in 1966 when she became the first woman elected to the Williamson County Court. She was a founding member and president of the Magistrates Association of Tennessee and the first female board member of Tennessee County Services; in 1970, she was the first woman appointed to the Tennessee Alcohol Beverage Commission, and during her four years on the commission, she was a member of the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators and served as that organization's president in 1974; and

WHEREAS, a lifelong Republican, she ran for the Tennessee Senate in 1970 and for the Tennessee House of Representatives in 1976, losing both races, but proudly bearing the Republican banner; in 1976, Libby Fryer was appointed by President Gerald R. Ford to a three-year term on the National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs; and

WHEREAS, she also served on the Advisory Committee for Tennessee Equal Vocational Opportunities and on the Tennessee Region V Social Services Council; other memberships included the Southern Regional Council, Mid-Cumberland Council of Governments, and the Criminal Task Force/Economic Development District; and

WHEREAS, in 1985, Mrs. Fryer was appointed to the Appeals Board of the United States Office of Education, a body that reviewed appeals of the spending of Title 1 funds, and she was a founding member and president of the Nashville Women's Political Caucus, serving as president of the Tennessee Women's Political Caucus; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Fryer lent her superb leadership skills to numerous civic endeavors and was an important figure in the advancement of many worthy organizations. She was a member of the Junior League of Nashville; CABLE of Nashville, a professional women's network which honored her with the Molly Todd Cup for service to the community; Nashville Arts

Council; Nashville Mental Health Center; Tennessee Historical Society; Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities; Daughters of the American Revolution; Ladies Hermitage Club; James K. Polk Association; Centennial Club; and Delta Delta Delta Women's Fraternity; and

WHEREAS, throughout her life, Libby Fryer dedicated herself to the pursuit of bettering the lives of her fellow human beings and improving her community. For more than a decade, she wrote a column for the *Review Appeal* newspaper in Franklin, and also produced a weekly radio program, "The Local Level," devoted to political news and discussion, for WAGG-AM radio in Franklin; in the 1980s, she drew on her interest in Nashville and Tennessee history to produce a series of interviews broadcast as "Old Nashville Town" on local Nashville cable television, and, beginning in 1989, for her "Then and Now" columns in the *Green Hills News*; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Fryer was also a frequent speaker on historical subjects, particularly on the life and career of President James K. Polk; she also served as a book reviewer during the later years of her life; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Fryer will be fondly remembered as a competitive athlete in her youth, excelling in a number of sports, including swimming, tennis, golf, and horseback riding; and

WHEREAS, she remained an avid sportswoman, and in her middle years, was one of a small group of women who formed a tennis group led by Charlotte (Mrs. Padge) Beasley of Franklin and Sarah (Mrs. Henry) Cannon, also known as "Minnie Pearl"; as the group expanded, its annual tournament, "The Charlotte-Pearl," became near-legendary for the quality of the female athletes' play on the courts and their good humor between sets; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Fryer was devoted to her family, and she endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; she was married in 1951 to Edward Allen Fryer of Nashville, who died in 1990; and

WHEREAS, she is survived by two children, Martha Leslie Hailey DuBose and William Savage Fryer; four grandchildren, Katherine DuBose Tomassi, Polly Marshall Bowman DuBose, Christopher John Fryer, and Geoffrey Edward Fryer; and one brother, Thomas B. Zerfoss, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Fryer leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Elizabeth “Libby” Zerfoss Fryer, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family and many friends of Elizabeth “Libby” Zerfoss Fryer.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.